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THE NEW MUTANTS™

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BOB MCLEOD

Stan Lee PRESENTS: Road Warriors!

STARRING THE NEW MUTANTS

IN THE HEART OF SAN FRANCISCO'S BUSINESS DISTRICT STANDS CARILLON TOWERS -- 60 STORIES TALL, HALF OFFICES, HALF LUXURY APARTMENTS -- AND IN ITS PENTHOUSE RESIDES THE MAN WHO HAD IT BUILT --

-- NGUYEN NGOC COY, FORMER GENERAL IN THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE NATIONAL POLICE. OFFICIALLY, HE'S A PROSPEROUS MULTINATIONAL BUSINESSMAN. IN REALITY, THOUGH, HE IS THE SELF-STYLED CRIME CZAR OF THE BAY AREA.

SACRE COEUR!

OVER THE YEARS, HE'S BEATEN BACK EVERY CHALLENGE TO HIS RULE, CRUSHED EVERY FOE. AT LAST, HE BELIEVES HE HAS NOTHING -- AND NO ONE TO FEAR.

HE'S WRONG.

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GOOD EVENING, UNCLE. HOW PLEASANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

SHAN!

KILL HER! KILL THEM ALL!

NO, UNCLE, THEY WILL NOT!

DISTINCTIVE HALO'S OF ENERGY ENSHROUD THE BODYGUARDS' HEADS AS KARMA POSSESSES THEM-- MAKING THEIR THOUGHTS, THEIR WILL, HER OWN.

AT THE SAME TIME, WOLFSBANE SHIFTS FROM HUMAN TO LUPINE FORM AND GOES AFTER GENERAL COY.

YYIII!

WE SHALL HAVE NO MORE TROUBLE FROM THESE LADIES. I HAVE MADE THEM FALL ASLEEP.

I PRAY, SAM, WE HAVE AS EASY A TIME WITH MY UNCLE.

WE REQUIRE INFORMATION, UNCLE, ABOUT A CRIMINAL--AN INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST-- NAMED *VIPER!*

YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME, GIRL.

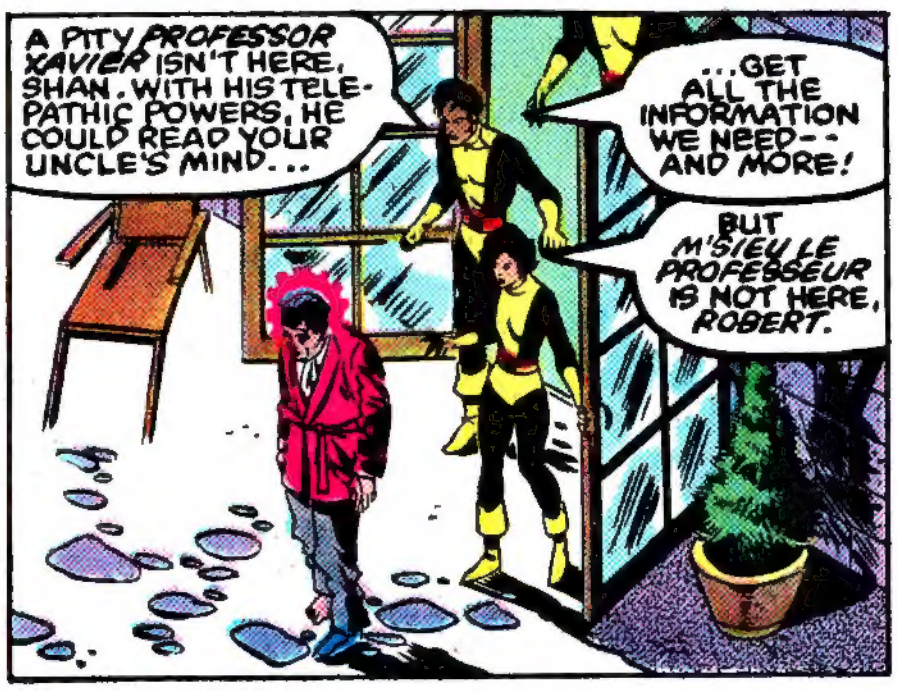
I AM A SIMPLE BUSINESSMAN. I HAVE NO DEALINGS WITH SUCH AS...

GRRRRR

WHY IS THE BEAST GROWLING? GET IT AWAY FROM ME, SHAN!

SHE KNOWS YOU ARE LYING, UNCLE, AS DO I.
WE ARE IN NO MOOD FOR GAMES. VIPER ABDUCTED A FRIEND OF OURS.
WE MEAN TO RESCUE HER-- AND YOU ARE GOING TO HELP US.
SUPPOSE I REFUSE?

THAT WOULD BE...
...REGRETTABLE.


A PITY PROFESSOR XAVIER ISN'T HERE, SHAN. WITH HIS TELEPATHIC POWERS, HE COULD READ YOUR UNCLE'S MIND...
...GET ALL THE INFORMATION WE NEED-- AND MORE!
BUT M'SIEU LE PROFESSEUR IS NOT HERE, ROBERT.

HE IS IN MEXICO, AIDING TEAM AMERICA.
EXCEPT WHEN HE CONTACTS US, WE ARE LEFT TO OUR OWN DEVICES.

LOOK DOWN, UNCLE. IT IS A 250 METER SHEER DROP TO CALIFORNIA STREET.

BLESSED SAINTS!
THEY CANNOT SAVE YOU-- BUT I CAN DESTROY YOU. A THOUGHT-- A SINGLE STEP--
--IS ALL THAT IS REQUIRED TO RID THE WORLD OF A PIECE OF HUMAN VERMIN.

TALK, UNCLE-- OR DIE!
NO.

DO IT!
POSSESS ME! KILL ME!
YOU CERTAINLY HAVE GOOD REASON. I BETRAYED YOUR PARENTS, CORRUPTED YOUR BROTHER--FORCED YOU TO DESTROY HIM--I AM EVERYTHING YOU HATE AND DESPISE, SHAN. SO TAKE MY LIFE...
...IF YOU CAN. IF YOU ARE NOT BLUFFING...
I...
...I...
...CANNOT.
YOUR FATHER AND THE PRIESTS TAUGHT YOU TOO WELL. IT SEEMS.
SHAN MAY HAVE SCRUPLES, YOU FAT PIG, BUT I AM NOT SO SQUEAMISH--!
ROBERTO, NO!
SAM, RAHNE--STOP HIM!
LET ME GO!
THE *NEW MUTANTS* DO NOT KILL, *ROBERT*. THAT IS OUR PLEDGE. IF WE DO NOT HOLD TRUE TO THOSE BELIEFS...
...THEN WE ARE NO BETTER THAN MY UNCLE.
TUT, TUT, CHILD--YOU JUDGE ME TOO HARSHLY. I AM NEITHER AN UNREASONABLE--NOR VINDICTIVE MAN. I'LL BE MOST HAPPY TO ASSIST YOU...
...FOR A PRICE.
YOUR SERVICES, SHAN, FOR A YEAR.
TO WORK AS MY BROTHER DID--
--USING MY MUTANT POWERS TO HELP HIM EXPAND HIS CRIMINAL EMPIRE.
IMPOSSIBLE! I WILL NOT--I...DARE NOT!
BUT WHAT THEN OF DANI? DO I ABANDON MY FRIEND?!
UNCLE...
...I ACCEPT.

SONORA PROVINCE, NEW MEXICO.

THE STILL DESERT AIR IS BROKEN BY THE ROAR OF HIGH-PERFORMANCE ENGINES AS A PAIR OF MOTORCYCLES MAKE THEIR WAY SOUTH TOWARDS THE MOUNTAINS.

IN THE LEAD IS R.U. REDDY -- TEAM AMERICA'S MOTO-CROSS EXPERT. STRUGGLING TO KEEP UP, EL LOBO -- THE WOLF -- THE OUTFIT'S FASTEST RIDER.

SPEED AIN'T EVERYTHING, M'MAN -- 'SPECIALLY OUT HERE.

YOU GOTTA KNOW WHERE TO LAND.

...AN' HOW.

WHUNNNFF!

GEE, WOLFIE, THAT LOOKED PAINFUL. CARE TO FINALLY ADMIT YOU'RE NOT IN MY LEAGUE?

YOU DID THAT ON PURPOSE, RED!

YOU'RE NOT ON SOME SPEEDWAY TRACK OR HIGHWAY, BUSTER, THIS IS THE *LAND*. YOU KEEP PLAYIN' THE BULLDOZER AN' YOU'RE GONNA SPEND MOST OF THE TRIP PICKIN' YOURSELF UP OUTTA THE DIRT.

WOLF, REDDY -- WHAT HAPPENED?

NOTHING, HONCHO -- JUST TEACHING OUR FIRE-EATING *COMPADRE* A LONG-OVERDUE LESSON.

HAVE YOU LOST YOUR SENSES?!!

MADRE DE DIOS! PROFESSOR XAVIER--SPEAKING TO US WITH HIS THOUGHTS!

NOT SO LOUD, SIR! YOUR PROJECTION IS SO INTENSE IT HURTS!

HOW DARE YOU ACT IN SO CHILDISH AND IRRESPONSIBLE A MANNER?! YOU KNOW WHAT IS AT STAKE--A YOUNG GIRL'S LIFE! YOU HAVE A LONG WAY YET TO GO AND A DANGEROUS MISSION TO ACCOMPLISH.

YOUR ONLY HOPE FOR SURVIVAL IS COOPERATION. YOU MUST TRUST EACH OTHER--WORK AS A TEAM--

--NOT PLAY TRICKS LIKE OVER-AGE SCHOOLBOYS.

I'M SORRY, SIR. IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN.

WRENCH, HOW'S WOLF'S BIKE?

HERE'RE THE TOOLS YOU WANTED, HONEY.

THANKS, GEORGINA. IT'LL NEED SOME MINOR REPAIRS, HONCHO. I'LL WORK AS FAST AS I CAN.

JUST MAKE SURE YOU GET IT RIGHT, *HOMBRE*.

THAT'S ENOUGH, WOLF.

YOU PROUD OF YOURSELF, REDDY? SCORED SOME POINTS, HAVE YOU?! WELL, I GOT SOME NEWS FOR YOU, BUDDY--FOR *ALL* OF YOU--

--THE PROFESSOR'S *RIGHT*! DANIELLE MOONSTAR IS COUNTING ON US! WE SCREW UP--WE KEEP ON THE WAY WE'RE GOING, ACTING LIKE A BUNCH OF AMATEURS--SHE'S AS GOOD AS DEAD!

AND SO ARE WE!

ON THE CALIFORNIA BANK OF THE COLORADO RIVER...

...IT'S THE MOST ADVANCED AIR-CRAFT IN THE WORLD, CHARLES XAVIER'S SPECIALLY MODIFIED, CUSTOM-BUILT SR-71 BLACKBIRD.

XAVIER IS A MUTANT--AS ARE HIS STUDENTS AND TEAM AMERICA--

CHARLES, ARE YOU WELL?

--ALL BORN WITH POWERS AND ABILITIES THAT SET THEM APART FROM HUMANITY AND MAKE THEM PARIAHS, OUTCASTS.

THE WOMAN IS LILANDRA--EXPATRIATE EMPRESS OF THE ALIEN SHI'AR--HIS BELOVED.

JUST TIRED. WE'VE LANDED MIDWAY BETWEEN TEAM AMERICA'S OBJECTIVE AND THE NEW MUTANTS IN SAN FRANCISCO--NEAR THE LIMIT OF MY TELEPATHIC RANGE FOR BOTH GROUPS.

THE STRESS OF THE JOURNEY IS MAGNI-FYING ALREADY EXISTING TENSIONS WITHIN TEAM AMERICA...

...THUS FORCING ME TO DEVOTE MOST OF MY ENERGY AND CON-CENTRATION TO THEM, LEAVING VIRTUALLY NONE TO SPARE FOR THE NEW MUTANTS.

YOU MUST REST, MY HEART.

YOU'LL BE OF NO USE TO ANYONE IF YOU EXHAUST YOURSELF.

I THOUGHT I COULD READILY SWITCH MY PSILINK FROM ONE GROUP TO THE OTHER--AND THEREBY KEEP TABS ON BOTH--BUT THAT'S PROVING IMPOSSIBLE!

OUR PLAN WAS FOR TEAM AMERICA TO STEAL THE CRYSTAL VIPER WANTS AND RETURN BEFORE DAWN...

...WHILE THE NEW MUTANTS TRY TO RESCUE DANI IN CASE TEAM AMERICA FAILS...

SO FAR NEITHER GROUP HAS ACCOMPLISHED ITS GOAL.

IT'S EARLY YET. WE MUST WAIT.

IT'S SO HARD, LIL.

IT IS THE PRICE ONE PAYS FOR BEING A LEADER.

BIG SUR, CALIFORNIA...

FACE FACTS, DANI, YOU'RE IN A DUNGEON, THE PRISONER OF SOME CRAZY WOMAN WHO PLANS TO KILL YOU IF SHE DOESN'T GET THE RANSOM SHE WANTS BY DAWN TOMORROW. SHE MAY KILL YOU ANYWAY.

YOU, GIRL, ARE IN BIG TROUBLE.

IF THERE ARE ANY GUARDS OUTSIDE...

...I CAN CREATE *SPIRIT-FORMS* TO SCARE THEM LIKE I DID THEIR BOSS, VIPER.

THAT'LL DO ME A WHOLE HECKUVA LOT OF GOOD. THE GOONS'LL PROBABLY JUST RUN AWAY.

WHAT I NEED IS A WAY TO GET THIS DOOR OPEN.

PROFESSOR XAVIER HAS BEEN TRYING TO TEACH ME TO CONTROL THE KINDS OF IMAGES I PULL FROM PEOPLES' HEADS. IF ONLY I COULD SOMEHOW *LURE* A GUARD IN HERE--OR CREATE SOLID REALITY INSTEAD OF PHANTOMS TO BASH THE DOOR DOWN...

...OR MAKE MY POWER WORK LONG DISTANCE AGAINST SOMEONE I CAN'T SEE, SO I COULD GIVE WHOEVER'S WATCHING ON THAT MONITOR A REAL FRIGHT!

WHAT A LOOK! THERE IS A PASSION--AN UNTAMED SPIRIT IN YOU, CHILD, THAT RIVALS VIPER'S.

I WONDER IF YOUR MENTOR, XAVIER, REALIZES HE HAS A TIGER BY THE TAIL!

HARADA-SAN, HOW FARES OUR YOUNG GUEST?

SHE IS DANGEROUS, VIPER. SHE SHOULD BE KILLED.

ALL IN GOOD TIME, WARRIOR. I WISH HER DEATH TO BE ARTISTIC, THAT TAKES SOME THOUGHT.

ALSO, I AM CURIOUS ABOUT HER POWERS.

WHAT AILS YOU, KENUICHIO? I DO NOT WISH TO PRY, BUT OF LATE YOU'VE SEEMED PREOCCUPIED. IT'S AFFECTING YOUR JUDGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY, AND THAT I CANNOT ALLOW...

...EVEN IN ONE I CARE FOR.

YASHIDA SHINGEN IS DEAD.

HE WAS MY *FATHER!*

I AM TRULY SORRY. I KNOW HOW MUCH HE MEANT TO YOU.

WILL YOU NOW BE RETURNING HOME, TO JAPAN, TO CLAIM YOUR INHERITANCE?

I HAVE *NO INHERITANCE!*

SHIGEN PLEDGED THAT, UPON HIS DEATH, *I* WOULD BECOME LORD OF CLAN YASHIDA! BUT MY PLACE HAS BEEN USURPED BY HIS DAUGHTER, *MARIKO.*

AND SHE HAS ANNOUNCED HER BETROTHAL...

...TO A *GAIJIN*, A FOREIGNER-- THE X-MAN, *WOLVERINE!*

I HAVE NO LAND, NO NAME--I AM *NOTHING!*

YOU ARE MY CHAMPION, AND MY FRIEND, WHEN WE FINISH OUR BUSINESS HERE, I SUGGEST WE DEPART FOR TOKYO...

...TO CLAIM WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY YOURS.

AND SHOULD THE LADY MARIKO AND HER PARAMOUR OBJECT...

...*THEY WILL DIE!*

BLACK MESA...

NO ONE KNOWS WHO BUILT THIS FORTRESS. BRIBES KEEP THE GOVERNMENT AT BAY AND THOSE WHO WON'T BE BOUGHT SIMPLY DISAPPEAR...

...AS DO ANY WHO PENETRATE ITS SECURITY ZONE.

BUT WELL WITHIN THAT SUPPOSEDLY IMPASSABLE SCREEN...

I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH RIDING, GUYS. WE'D NEVER HAVE REACHED THE FORT AT ALL--MUCH LESS ON SCHEDULE--WITHOUT YOU TWO BLAZING OUR TRAIL.

FIND ME A BIG, SOFT BED, WILLYA, GEEGEE--THIS RICH KID IS BEAT!

THE CREDIT, AMIGO IS YOURS. FOR ALL MY SPEED, I WOULD HAVE CRASHED LONG AGO, HAD YOU NOT SHOWED ME THE WAY.

THANKS, WOLF. THAT MEANS A LOT TO ME.

BUT WE'D NEVER HAVE BEEN ON TIME WITHOUT YOU PUSHING US ON.

MAYBE THAT'S WHAT XAVIER MEANT BY TEAMWORK.

PERHAPS, MY FRIEND, YOU ARE RIGHT.

I SPOTTED WRENCH AN' HONCHO, GEEGEE. THEY'RE CLIMBIN' THE WALL.

WHAT GIVES--?! THE BOYS SLEEPIN'?!!

MY DOING, COWBOY. THEY'VE EARNED THEIR REST AND, WHILE ASLEEP--WITH THEIR NATURAL DEFENSES WEAKENED--

--I CAN MORE EASILY HONE THEIR MUTANT ABILITIES, EVEN AT THIS DISTANCE.

BETTER THEM THAN ME, PARD. I AIN'T SURE I LIKE TH' IDEA OF SOMEBODY--EVEN YOU, PROF--POKIN' ABOUT INSIDE MY HEAD.

C'MON, GEEGEE. I NEED A HAND WITH THE BIKES.

THAT PLACE LOOKS SO FRIGHTENING. I HOPE WRENCH AND HONCHO ARE OKAY.

HECKUVA WAY TO EARN A LIVING, EH, HONCHO?

BEWARE, BOTH OF YOU. GUARDS ARE APPROACHING.

THANKS, PROFESSOR. I'LL TAKE CARE OF 'EM.

BOP!

PUT ON THEIR UNIFORMS, WRENCH. WE'LL BE ABLE TO MOVE MORE FREELY IN DISGUISE.

HONCHO, THEY'RE *WOMEN!*

THESE OUTFITS ARE SO BULKY, PAL, NO ONE'LL NOTICE.

WHO ARE THEY, DO YOU KNOW?

A.I.M.--ADVANCED IDEA MECHANICS--A CRIMINAL THINK TANK.

I SCANNED A LAYOUT OF THE COMPLEX FROM THE GUARDS, BEFORE YOU RENDERED THEM UNCONSCIOUS, HONCHO. I WILL MENTALLY DIRECT YOU TO YOUR DESTINATION.

OKAY, SIR. ANY IDEA WHAT'S GOING ON?

I SENSE REFERENCES TO A "PROJECT: MATRIX..!"

...BUT LITTLE BEYOND THAT. THE THOUGHTS OF THE RESEARCH STAFF ARE SHIELDED BY SOPHISTICATED PSI-SCREENS.

THERE IS CONSIDERABLE EXCITEMENT IN THEIR MINDS, BUT ALSO CONSIDERABLE APPREHENSION--ALMOST FEAR.

I CAN EMPATHIZE WITH THAT FEELING, PROFESSOR.

THERE'S THE VAULT, WRENCH. YOUR TURN TO STRUT YOUR STUFF.

THE LOCK'S ELECTRONICALLY CODED. IT'LL TAKE TOO LONG TO DOPE OUT THE PROPER COMBINATION.

DO WHAT YOU THINK BEST, BUT FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, DON'T MAKE A...

"...MISTAKE..."

CLANGA-LANGALA-NGALANG!

UNAUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ON THE CATWALK!

GUN THEM DOWN!

HURRY UP, WRENCH! I CAN'T HOLD 'EM OFF FOREVER!

VAULT'S OPEN, HONCHO!

AND THAT'S WHAT WE CAME FOR--THAT *CRYSTAL!*

I NEVER IMAGINED IT COULD BE SO BEAUTIFUL!

ADMIRE IT LATER! RIGHT NOW--

-- JUST GRAB THAT ROCK AND *RUN!*

BUT BEFORE EITHER MAN CAN TAKE MORE THAN A FEW STEPS...

BWHOOOM!

THE *FORTRESS!*

HONCHO! WRENCH!

MY LORD-- NO!

SIMULTANEOUSLY... A PSYCHIC ATTACK-- FROM BLACK MESA-- SO SAVAGE, SO POWERFUL--CAN'T REPEL IT!

THE SOURCE-- IT'S A *MUTANT!*

XAVIER'S FORMIDIBLE TELE-PATHIC POWERS PROVE HIS UNDOING AS THE ROGUE MUTANT HOMES IN ON HIM, STRIKING HIM DOWN AND--THROUGH THE RAPPORT HE SHARES WITH LILANDRA--HER AS WELL.

BIG SUR...

...VIPER'S ESTATE.

...HER GUARDS--MERCENARIES, THE BEST MONEY CAN BUY--ON FULL ALERT...

...FOR ALL THE GOOD THAT DOES THEM.

OH!?!

THIS REMINDS ME O'THE NIGHT WE FIRST MET...*

SHUSH, SAM, PLEASE.

TROUBLE, SHAN?

I WAS SUPPOSED TO CONSULT WITH PROFESSOR XAVIER BEFORE TAKING ANY FURTHER ACTION. BUT HE IS NOT ANSWERING MY MINDCALLS.

HE'S PROBABLY TOO BUSY WITH HIS NEW DARLINGS, TEAM AMERICA.

*IN THE NEW MUTANTS GRAPHIC NOVEL-- L.

AH THOUGHT THEY WERE YOUR HEROES, BOBBY, 'SPECIALLY WOLF.

THEY WERE, 'TIL I *MET* THEM.

IT IS GETTING LATE, WE CAN WAIT NO LONGER FOR THE PROFESSOR.

MOVE CAREFULLY AND QUIETLY, MES BRAVES...

SHAAANNNNNN...

WHO CALLS MY NAME?

PROFESSOR XAVIER, IS THAT YOU?

HAROLY, DEAR GIRL. I AM THAT WHICH WILL BRING ABOUT HIS DESTRUCTION...

...AND YOU SHALL BE MY INSTRUMENT.

NO!!

BLESSED MADONNA, WHAT DID I SEE, WHAT FRIGHTENED ME SO--WHAT HAVE I *DONE*?

WHY DID YOU *SCREAM*?! LOOK OUT-- A *SEARCHLIGHT*!

THERE THEY ARE!

INTRUDER ALERT! OUTSIDE, ON THE DOUBLE!

WHAT ARE THE ORDERS?

WHADDYA THINK, DUMMY?

SORRY, GENTS, BUT THE NEW MUTANTS DON'T TAKE KINDLY T' BEIN' USED F'R TARGET PRACTICE.

LIKE HIS NAMESAKE, CANNONBALL PLOWS THROUGH THE BARRACKS-- SHATTERING THE BUILDING AND SCATTERING ITS OCCUPANTS---

---WHILE SUNSPOT USES HIS PHENOMENAL STRENGTH...

...DERIVED FROM SOLAR ENERGY...

...TO EQUALLY GOOD EFFECTS

SPLENDID. *ROBERT* ELIMINATED THE GENERATOR AND, WITH IT, THE LIGHTS.

THE DARK-NESS IS AN ALLY I SHALL PUT TO GOOD USE.

TWO GUARDS ARE POSSESSED...

...AND IMMEDIATELY, AT SHAN'S DIRECTION, ATTACK THEIR COMRADES.

MEANWHILE, IN HER CELL...

YOW!!

IS IT AN EARTHQUAKE?

I GUESS NOT. SOUNDS LIKE A HECKUVA FIGHT UPSTAIRS-- UH-OH!

ALMOST AUTOMATICALLY, PSYCHE'S MIND INTERFACES WITH THE GUARDS', FINDING EACH MAN'S PRIMAL TERROR AND GENERATING A LIFELIKE HOLOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF IT...

...THEREBY THROWING THEM OFF-BALANCE FOR A FEW CRITICAL SECONDS.

OUCH--THAT *HURT!*

SOCKING PEOPLE IS A LOT HARDER THAN IT LOOKS ON T.V.

NOW WHERE'S THE EXIT-- *RAHNE!?!*

SHE'S UNCONSCIOUS-- BLEEDING--SOMEONE SLASHED HER DOWN ONE SIDE!

THAT BLOW WAS MEANT TO KILL...

...AS IS *THIS ONE!*

NORTHERN MEXICO...

I STILL DO NOT UNDERSTAND HOW YOU SURVIVED THAT EXPLOSION, HOMBRE.

ME NEITHER, WOLF. CHALK IT UP TO DUMB LUCK. UNLESS IT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT CRYSTAL.

I FIGURE AN HOUR TO THE BORDER, BOSS. WE'RE HOME FREE.

I DO NOT LIKE THE FACT THAT WE HAVE HEARD NOTHING FROM XAVIER--GEEGEE. LOOK OUT!

SBLAM!

MY BIKE--I'M LOSING IT!

A.I.M. HOVERCRAFT! I DID NOT THINK THEY WOULD GIVE UP SO EASILY.

WE'VE GOT NO GUNS! HOW CAN WE FIGHT THEM?!

I'LL KEEP 'EM BUSY!

THE REST O' YOU HIGH-TAIL IT FOR HOME!

COWBOY, NO! IT'S SUICIDE!

IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE, WOLF. C'MON, LET'S RIDE!

BLACK RIDER, HEAR ME!

COME TO ME, THAT I MAY AID MY FRIEND!

ARE YOU CRAZY?

PERHAPS--BUT XAVIER HAS BEEN WORKING WITH US, HELPING US CONTROL OUR POWERS. LET US SEE IF IT WORKS. THIS IS SOMETHING I *MUST* DO, HONCHO! THE BOY DA COSTA, SAID SOME HARSH THINGS ABOUT ME, REMEMBER? I AM THINKING THAT MAYBE HE SPOKE THE TRUTH.

I DID NOT WISH TO BE MUTANT OR HERO...

...BUT SINCE FATE HAS MADE ME BOTH...

...I WILL DO SO WITH *HONOR!*

BLACK RIDER! AID ME!

WOLF!!

SUCKER MOVES LIKE A JACKRABBIT!

BOX HIM IN! DON'T GIVE HIM ROOM TO MANEUVER!

SUDDENLY...

WHAT THE—?!?

NEITHER BIKE NOR RIDER SHOULD HAVE BEEN CAPABLE OF EVEN THIS FEAT...

...MUCH LESS WHAT FOLLOWS IN QUICK SUCCESSION...

...AS THE BLACK RIDER LEAPS FROM ONE CRAFT TO THE NEXT...

...TO THE THIRD...

...BEFORE LANDING ON THE PILLION...

...OF COWBOY'S BIKE.

HOLY COW! WOLF--BUDDY--IS THAT YOU?!?

IN PART--AND YET, I AM SO MUCH MORE. I SUMMONED THE POWER OF THE BLACK RIDER COWBOY--THE SENSATIONS ARE INDESCRIBABLE, MAGNIFICENT!

I HAVE NEVER FELT SO CAPABLE, AS IF THERE IS NOTHING I CANNOT DO.

GLAD TO HEAR IT, PARD, 'CAUSE WE GOT MORE COMPANY.

WHAT SAY WE GO GET 'EM.

VIPER'S...

YOUR MIND-PHANTOMS CANNOT SAVE YOU, WITCH-CHILD.

NO PROBLEM, BIG FELLA-- AH'LL DO IT!

CANNONBALL!

AH FIGURE YOU OWE ME A REMATCH...

...FOR OUR LITTLE SCRAP BACK IN NEW YORK...*

*LAST ISH--L.

THIS IS A GOOD A TIME AN' PLACE AS ANY T' SETTLE UP, WOULDN'T 'CHA SAY?

AH HOPE THE LANDING HURT, SAMURAI. THERE'S MORE LIKE IT T' COME.

APPROACH ME THEN, BOY--IF YOU DARE--SO THAT MY ENERGY BLADE MAY SWIFTLY SEND YOU TO JOIN YOUR MISBEGOTTEN ANCESTORS.

STAY BACK, SAM!

THE NEXT ROUND IS MINE!

WHAT A BLOW! I FELT IT EVEN THROUGH MY ARMOR! I CANNOT WITHSTAND ANOTHER.

MY PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY IS TO VIPER. ONCE I HAVE DETERMINED SHE IS ALL RIGHT...

...I WILL DISPOSE OF THESE UPSTART CHILDREN.

NO--NOT AGAIN!

HE'S DISAPPEARING!

AS THE SAMURAI USES HIS TELEPORT RING TO SEER OUT HIS MISTRESS, SHE IS LOCKED IN A FEROCIOUS BATTLE OF WILLS WITH KARMA. THE YOUNG MUTANT IS TRYING TO POSSESS HER...

...WHILE VIPER RESISTS...

...TRYING WITH ALL HER MIGHT TO POINT HER GUN AT KARMA'S HEAD...

...AND PULL THE TRIGGER.

VIPER--!

HARADA--YOU FOOL!

MERCI, SAMURAI--YOUR DISTRACTION IS PRECISELY WHAT I REQUIRED...

...TO OVERWHELM VIPER'S DEFENSES AND SEIZE HER MIND.

DROP YOUR SWORD...

...OR I WILL FIRE!

VIPER SPEAKS...

...BUT WITH KARMA'S VOICE! MAY YOUR GODS HAVE MERCY ON YOU, BRAT!

...FOR VIPER SURELY WILL NOT.

HAH! STRIKING VIPER AFFECTED THE GIRL--I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.

YOU'RE VULNERABLE, KARMA.

IT WOULD TAKE NO EFFORT TO KILL YOU.

BUT I PREFER LEAVING THAT PLEASURE TO VIPER.

COLORADO RIVER...

...SUNRISE...

UHHHHNNNN...

HE'S COMING 'ROUND!

ABOUT TIME!

AT LEAST WE KNOW WHY THE PROFESSOR STOPPED ANSWERING US. WHAT HIT YOU, SIR?

A PSYCHIC ASSAULT, THE LIKE OF WHICH I'VE NEVER EXPERIENCED. LILANDRA--?!?

MY HEADACHE IS AS FIERCE AS YOURS BELOVED, BUT I AM RECOVERING.

THERE'S NO SIGN OF THE ENTITY ANYMORE.

MAYBE IT WAS DESTROYED IN THE EXPLOSION, WHAT YOU FELT WAS ITS DEATH TRAUMA.

I ALMOST WISH THAT WERE THE CASE, HONCHO. UNFORTUNATELY, I SENSED NOT DEATH, BUT *BIRTH*.

A NEW MUTANT, POSSESSING UNKNOWN ABILITIES, UNIMAGINABLE POWER-- IF ONLY WE KNEW WHAT A.I.M. WAS WORKING ON?!

WE GOT THE CRYSTAL, PROFESSOR THAT COUNTS FOR SOMETHING.

AND RAISES ANOTHER QUESTION-- WHY DOES VIPER WANT IT?

STRAP YOURSELVES IN, WHILE LILANDRA AND I PREPARE THE *BLACKBIRD* FOR TAKE-OFF. I'VE BEEN OUT OF CONTACT WITH MY STUDENTS TOO LONG! WE MUST GET TO THEM QUICKLY!

WAIT A MINUTE, PROFESSOR.

WE HAD TO LEAVE TWO OF OUR TEAM-MATES BEHIND IN THE DESERT. WE GO NOWHERE WITHOUT THEM.

OF COURSE NOT. BUT THEY SHOULD REACH US BY THE TIME WE'RE READY TO LEAVE.

HUH!?!

BIG SUR...

SHAN!

DANI!!

IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOU, MY FRIEND.

SAME HERE. I'VE NEVER BEEN SO HAPPY IN MY LIFE!

IS THIS THE LATEST IN WILD WEST FASHIONS? IT IS VERY BECOMING.

GIMME A BREAK, WILLYA, SHAN? NOT IN FRONT OF THE GUYS.

RAHNE--SHE'S HURT!

THE SAMURAI CUT HER. THE WOUND WAS PRETTY NASTY, BUT IT'S HEALING LIKE WILDFIRE. I THINK SHE'LL BE FINE.

SHAN, RAHNE TOLD ME ABOUT THE DEAL YOU MADE WITH YOUR UNCLE. I WON'T LET YOU DO IT.

IT IS NOT YOUR CONCERN, DANI.

THE HECK IT ISN'T! IF NOT FOR ME, YOU WOULDN'T BE IN THIS MESS--AND IF ANYONE SHOULD PAY THE DEBT, IT'S *ME*!

I GAVE MY WORD.

STUDENTS!

KARMA, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?! I INSTRUCTED YOU TO CONSULT WITH ME BEFORE TAKING ANY ACTION AGAINST VIPER!

I TRIED, *M'SIEU*, YOU DID NOT REPLY.

I HAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO PROCEED ON MY OWN INITIATIVE.

I'D HAVE PREFERRED THAT YOU WAIT, BUT IN LIGHT OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES--AND YOUR SUCCESS--I SUPPORT YOUR DECISION.

WE ARE AIRBORNE AND WILL REACH YOU WITHIN THE HOUR...

THE PROFESSOR'S ASTRAL IMAGE--CHANGING BEFORE MY EYES!

...BULLPEN BULLETINS....

IF YOU KNEW SUSHI...

The Bullpen is as quiet as Davey Jones' Locker. Why? Because the whole crew is out to lunch. Before anyone says that we've all been "out to lunch" for years, allow me to point out that this is a special occasion – Mornie Kuramoto, paste-up and production ace, has led virtually everyone in the Bullpen off to his favorite Japanese restaurant in search of sushi and sashimi. Sashimi, if you don't know, is raw fish – a popular item in Japan, I hear. Honorable Mornie-san swears by it, and, hey, the stuff *must* be good for you judging from Mornie, who's the picture of health. I couldn't go along to the sushi party because, being Editor in Chief, I've *got* to stay here and finish this Bullpen Bulletins' column. It's late!

Besides... *raw fish?* Blech!

A FEW MORE WORDS...

... about Mornie. Around the Bullpen Mornie is known affectionately as "the Ancient One" – probably because he was old when Confuscius was a baby. It is said that he taught Cuneform lettering to Hammurabi, and pasted up the Dead Sea Scrolls. I'm not sure that those claims are true, but I do know that Mornie taught *me* most of what I know about comics production work, and that he's one of the best, most respected behind-the-scenes people in comics.

But *raw fish??*

TEN CON MEN... AND A CON LADY!

Ever been to a Comics Convention? In case you've never borne witness to one of these extravaganzas, they're gatherings of fans, comics dealers and comics professionals organized by comics clubs or independent promoters. They usually take place over a weekend, usually in a hotel or convention center. They feature special presentations, panel discussions, and workshops with professional artists, writers and editors, and they offer fans a chance to meet their favorite creators, meet and talk to each other, and buy (or sell) comics and other goodies at the ever-present dealer's tables.

There are bunches of conventions coming up throughout the spring and summer (Watch the classified ads in the comics for info – most major conventions advertise in our comics as well as in local media!) and Marvel Comics folks are going to be attending almost all of them! We'll be meeting you, talking to you, *listening* to you... *and* looking at your samples.

Especially at the biggest, snazziest convention of them all – this year's SAN DIEGO COMICS CONVENTION! Not one, not three, but *all* of the Marvel Comics Editors will be there – Larry Hama, Denny O'Neil, Louise Jones, Tom DeFalco, Mark Gruenwald, Ralph Macchio, Bob Budiansky, Carl Potts and Al Milgrom. I'll be there too, of course, and so will Archie Goodwin, Editorial Director of *EPIC Illustrated* and the *EPIC Comics Line*. Yes, the entire Marvel Comics Creative Brain Trust will be there – *all* of the people in charge of *all* of Marvel's publications. This is your chance to get at 'em, to show your samples, ask your questions, or just to shoot the breeze. The San Diego Con is at the San Diego Convention and Performing Arts Center, at 2nd and "C" Streets in downtown San Diego, August 4th through August 7th. For more information write to: Gene Henderson at San Diego Comic Convention, 150 S. James, Orange, California, 92669.

Now there's only one thing worrying me. While all the editors are off in San Diego, back here, the *assistant editors* will be in charge and all on their own! And while the cat's away...

Uh-oh.

AND NOW, EVEN BIGGER NEWS!

It's as simple as this – there's a terrific *new look* coming to the covers of Marvel publications! Take a look below!

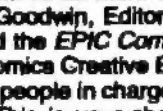
The new look will be debuting on the comics which go on sale in July. Watch for it!

AND ON THAT NOTE...

So long for now. I'm going to order myself a ham and swiss on rye from the deli down on the corner.

Raw fish? Baloney!

Stay well.



Jim Shooter

THE HYPE BOX

ALPHA FLIGHT #1 — For years you've been seeing hints of Alpha Flight in the pages of the X-MEN and other Marvel mags. And for years you've been demanding that the Canadian Mutants get their own mag. Well, here it is at last, and to get things started with a bang, writer-penciler-inker JOHN BYRNE's given you a lovingly-crafted 48-page introduction to their new monthly series. This is the big one.

STAR WARS #74 — Hey, Lucasfans, what with all the furor over the upcoming *Return of the Jedi* movie, Super Special and limited series, we hope you haven't forgotten the sensational job JO DUFFY, RON FRENZ and TOM PALMER are doing each and every month on the "regular" STAR WARS title. It's star-hopping adventure at its best — and we don't mean maybe! Pick up an issue today, and see for yourselves.

DOCTOR STRANGE #60 — Reliably spectacular ROGER STERN and TERRY AUSTIN are still respectively writing and inking this series regularly, and their titanic talents have been recently joined by the fantastic pencilling of DAN (you thought he could only ink) GREEN. This is a book you must check out, especially this month, when Doc and the **Scarlet Witch** join their powers magickal against the vampiric threat of... *Dracula!* It's a pulse-stopper.

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

- ☐ **THE THING #2**
- ☐ **DAREDEVIL #197**
- ☐ **KA-ZAR #27**
- ☐ **NEW MUTANTS #6**
- ☐ **RED SONJA #1** — (Limited Series)
- ☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #243**
- ☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #284**
- ☐ **THOR #334**
- ☐ **INDIANA JONES #6**
- ☐ **U.S. 1 #4**
- ☐ **DOCTOR STRANGE #60**
- ☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #286**
- ☐ **AVENGERS #234**
- ☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN #149**
- ☐ **MARVEL TALES #154** — Reprinting **Amazing Spider-Man #16** by STAN LEE and STEVE DITKO, "Duel With Daredevil"
- ☐ **X-MEN # 172**
- ☐ **ROM #45**
- ☐ **POWER MAN/IRON FIST #96**
- ☐ **G.I. JOE #14**
- ☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #257**
- ☐ **MARVEL TEAM-UP #132** — **Spider-Man** and **Mr. Fantastic!**
- ☐ **IRON MAN #173**
- ☐ **PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #81**
- ☐ **DEFENDERS #122**
- ☐ **STAR WARS #74**
- ☐ **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE #8**
- ☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT #1**
- ☐ **WHAT IF #40** — Featuring **Dr. Strange.**

MARVEL ANNUALS

- ☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK ANNUAL #12**

MARVEL MAGAZINES

- ☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #90**
- ☐ **MARVEL AGE #5**
- ☐ **BLIP #5**
- ☐ **MARVEL SUPER SPECIAL #25: ROCK & RULE** — The Official comic magazine version of Nelvana Studios' sensational new full-length animated rock & roll fantasy film, adapted by BILL MANTLO, with art taken directly from the film *itself!* Plus, articles and photos about the making of the film.

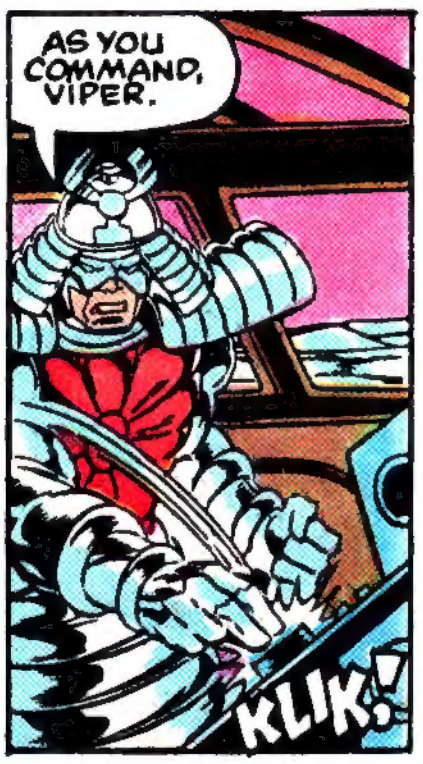
EPIC COMICS

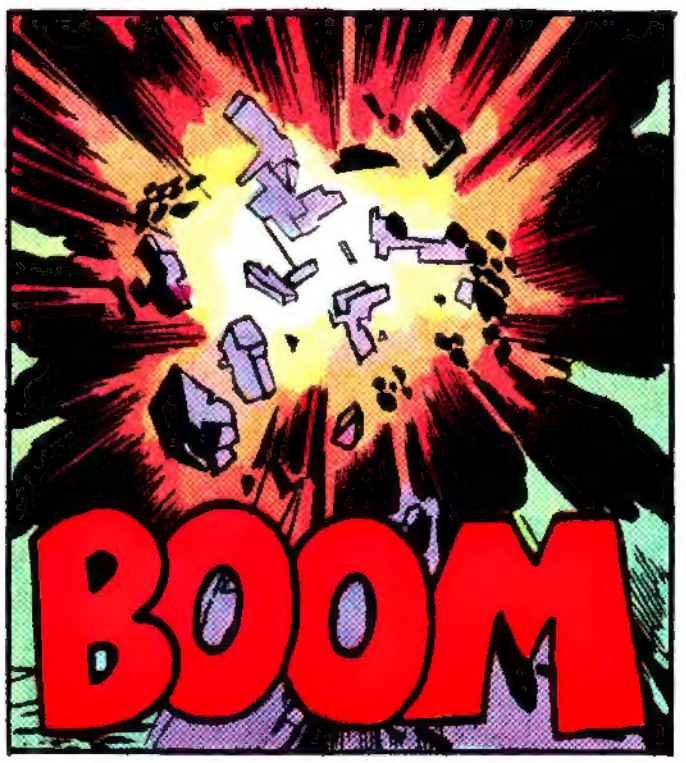
- ☐ **COYOTE #2**

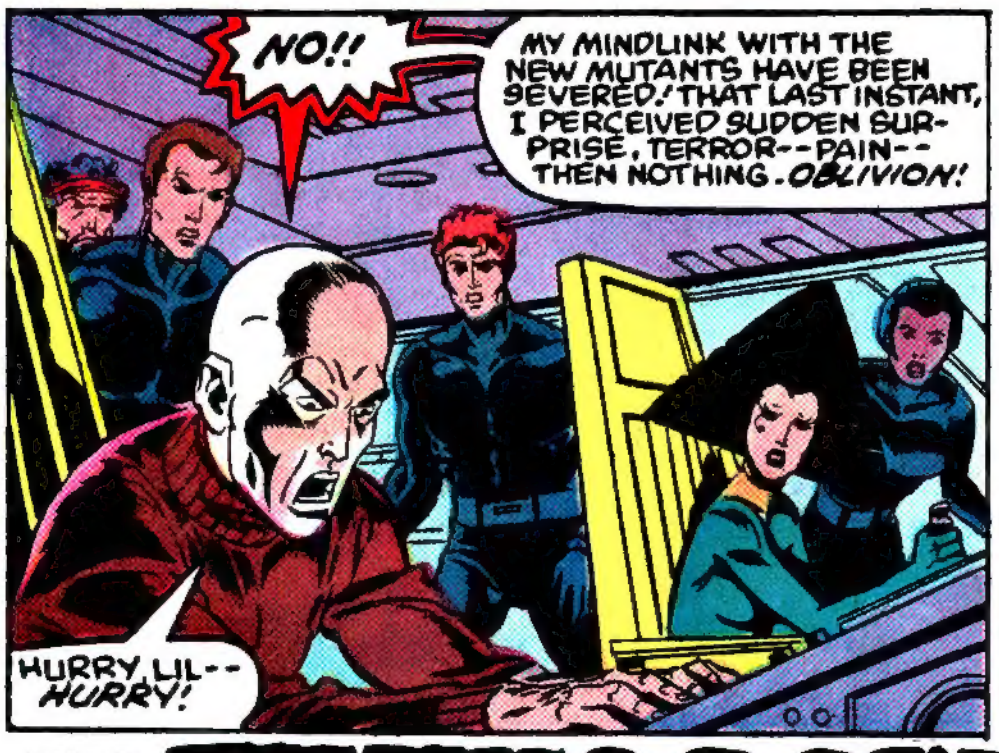
MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVELS

- ☐ **#7: KILLRAVEN** — by DON MacGREGOR and P. CRAIG RUSSELL

SHAN! WHY'D YOU SCREAM?!
SHE'S SPEAKING VIETNAMESE-- I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HER!
DANI, GRAB RAHNE. BOBBY, GIMME A HAND WITH SHAN.
LET'S GET OUTTA HERE.






NO!!
MY MINDLINK WITH THE NEW MUTANTS HAVE BEEN SEVERED! THAT LAST INSTANT, I PERCEIVED SUDDEN SURPRISE, TERROR--PAIN-- THEN NOTHING. OBLIVION!
HURRY LIL-- HURRY!

NEXT ISSUE: **FLYING DOWN TO RIO!**

MUTANT MAIL

% MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

LOUISE JONES
EDITOR
DANNY FINGEROTH
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dear Ms. Jones,

NEW MUTANTS#1 was good. I expect #2 to be even better (if possible).

It was nice to see Gabrielle Haller – from X-MEN #161 – again. She still has the same last name. She hasn't married, then? She is Ambassador in her own right, rather than a diplomat's wife? And she is the mother of Charles Xavier's son?

My scant knowledge of the Pinyin transliteration system indicates that a more phonetic spelling of X'ian is Shan. Yet isn't Xi'an Karma's surname? With a twin brother named Tranh, it seems more likely to me that the rhyming Manh is her given name. Do the others call her Shan out of ethnocentricity, ignorant that in the Orient the surname comes first? Or is it because she has seen and done things no child should have to see or do and is therefore addressed by her surname, like an adult?

Why is Rahne the werewolf, called Wolfsbane? The herb wolfsbane is supposed to drive away werewolves, and the word itself literally means "wolf killer." By the way, please tell Mr. Claremont that Miss Sinclair is Scottish, not Scotch. Also, as a Brazilian, Roberto speaks Portuguese, not Spanish, and I have just finished reading E. Adamson Hoebel's *Cheyennes: Indians of the Great Plains*. I'll be watching very carefully. Stay on your toes.

I recommend Illyana Rasputin study with the New Mutants. She may or may not be a mutant, like her brother, but since such powers generally manifest themselves during adolescence, we should find out in the next four years. We know she's a half-trained sorceress. At any rate, she has to go to school, so let her study and exercise with the New Mutants.

Karma's an orphan. Where are Leong and Nga? Tranh sounds dead, but where are her younger brother and sister? Sunspot and Karma are both from the upper classes in their countries. Cannonball is from a poor mining family. Illyana was originally from a Russian commune. I don't have enough data to extrapolate Wolfsbane's and Psyche's socioeconomic statuses. Cannonball is probably a Baptist. Sunspot is Roman Catholic. Karma is either Roman Catholic or Mahayana Buddhist. Illyana was probably raised either Russian Orthodox or atheist. Wolfsbane had a strict Christian upbringing, but I don't know the denomination. I don't know Psyche's religious background. You've got a fascinating heterogeneous team.

I loved the first issue. I hope the next few hundred are just as good. Best wishes, good luck, excelsior!

Susan M. Murrie
San Diego, CA

Whew! Starting from the top and moving fast: Gabrielle Haller is not married and is the Ambassador; likewise, she is the mother of Charles Xavier's son. Shan's surname is Manh; and yes – she does function as an adult, serving as single parent to her brother and sister, who live with her in Salem Center. Rahne's code name reflects her inner battle – fascinated by her mutant power yet terrified of it. Also, Rahne says she is Scots, and she must know! More on Illyana will be revealed in this book, in THE X-MEN and in her own mini-series, on sale this summer, with script by Claremont, art by John Buscema and Tom Palmer.

Hi, guys!

I've just read NEW MUTANTS #1. I basically like the idea of more young mutants and have actually been looking forward to this book for quite some time, but the group you found doesn't really look too promising.

Their code-names are poor, and most of their mutant powers are unsuitable. Cannonball is practically useless. If he can't control his trajectory at all, or even stop himself, there is little he can do. Karma looks a bit better but her code-name is totally unrelated to her powers. If she can only control another's mind and body, she could be unable to make them do something they can't do. She couldn't make Sam turn when he can't do that unless she used pure telekinetics – or Sam can maneuver but doesn't know how.

Rahne will probably be the most fun character. She has an excellent power but seems to lack the aggressive nature which would allow her to use her wolf skills to best advantage. "Wolfsbane" also is a poor name choice. Sunspot has an excellent name and excellent powers, although I do not fully understand them. He is also charming and intelligent. More than I can say for Sam. Bobby will go far, I'm sure.

I saved Dani for last because I've got a lot to say. Her powers are so frightening and uncontrollable, she is the mutant who needs this school most. Xavier's original purpose, to train mutants in the use and control of their abilities, reflects Dani's needs perfectly. Now her powers can do nothing but scare away friends and enemies alike. She needs to be able to not use her power and to control it properly when she does. What I like best are her tremendous agility and fighting abilities. Her Indian heritage and brave personality make her a fun person. I'm glad she had a friend in Rahne.

Now I have question: If Xavier really doesn't want new X-Men, why did he give his new students old X-Men costumes? Why not gym suits with the school name on them like a real school? When did Stevie Hunter become a teacher at the school? I thought she taught dancing in town. Will we see the X-Men here often?

I think I'll take back my opening statements. You have fine people – except maybe Sam – and lots of potential. Long live the New Mutants.

Patti Hemeleski
Bloomfield, NJ 07003

As you say, Patti, Xavier runs a *school*. If the New Mutants all knew what to do with themselves and their abilities, they'd have no reason to attend. As time passes and they learn how to cope with their powers, their proficiency will increase and hopefully they'll be able to do more and do it better.

Karma has an advantage over the others because she's older and has been using her powers for some time. That enabled her, when she possessed Sam, to exploit potential abilities that, at the time, he could not; hence, his unexpected turn.

As for Rahne's lack of aggression, she isn't a traditional werewolf – part human, part wolf, with complete sets of instincts for both species. She's a metamorph, a shape-changer, who can shift from one specific form to another. Her only instincts, however, are human. How would you feel about biting someone, about tasting blood? It's difficult enough to imagine, infinitely harder to execute, and the emotional cost to Rahne when it's all over and she's human once more is tremendous.

As regards school uniforms, there was a delay at the manufacturing plant, but they'll get more traditional outfits eventually. The Mutants say, "Gym suits??!! Ugh!" on the other hand, the old X-Men uniforms are insulated, durable – in Rahne's case, their unstable molecules come in most handy when she's shape-shifting.

Stevie does teach in town, but Xavier hired her – presumably prior to NM #1 – to work part-time at the school, since she already knew of the X-men and could be trusted with the kids' secret identities. Also, she's a good teacher.

Finally, yes, the X-Men will show up from time to time – in fact, they appear next issue.

Dear Chris,

Regarding NEW MUTANTS #1: who taught you French? Page 3, panel 2: *"Ma mere! Ma pere! C'est impossible!" C'est juste!* Correction: *"Ma mere! Mon Pere!"*

Altogether, the story was very well set out with a good plot and I shall look forward to seeing the London situation develop.

J. Robey
92, Dukes Ave
New Malden, Surrey
England

An error in transcription, Jay. Sorry about that. Xi'an was mad, too!

Dear Chris, Bob and Louise,

Okay, you've probably received enough raves about NEW MUTANTS #1 from other fans, so I'll save my own deathless prose for a future issue, when you'll be a cohesive unit, churning out comic book miracles.

No, this missive is for one purpose only – letter page title suggestions! Yes, with a new title comes a new lettercol and all sorts of ideas for the title from readers like myself.

So, without further ado, here are my creations: Mutant Messages, Danger Room Mail, Telepathic Telegrams, X-Altations, X-Changes, X-Clamation Point.

Conrad Felber
P.O. Box 2347
Cochrane, Ontario, Canada
POL 1CO

Conrad, there is no such thing as receiving enough raves; we'll take all we can get! But you're right with new titles come new lettercols and with them, great responsibility – to choose the right headline. Chris's original suggestion was: "Baby Talk." The New Mutants, however, after a brief... talk... with him, prompted him to change his mind. Yours are pretty good, but we'd like to hear from more readers. 'Til then, to fill the space, we'll use that venerable standby: "Mutant Mail."

MINUTEMEN

Quick STOP

RST